

Horseman turns on the class

By STUART EARP

Wycombe Wanderers 2, Metropolitan Police 0

IN ICY CONDITIONS at Loakes Park on Tuesday night, Wycombe Wanderers came up with some of their very best football of the season against Metropolitan Police in a friendly. Only rank bad finishing robbed them of half a dozen goals.

But despite the lack of goals, I think many of the spartan spectators will forgive the Blues whose first half performance was a joy to watch. Three, four and sometimes five man attacks completely overwhelmed the Police side, who spent the entire game defending. Poor Peter Spittle in goal was in danger of getting frostbite!

Leading this super Wycombe display was the veteran Tony Horseman who produced a vintage performance capped by a typical first half goal. Revelling in a generous amount of space and excellent service from midfield and defence, 'Bodger' thoroughly enjoyed himself and could easily have had a hat-trick. Only some fine saves and the excellent handling of Mackleworth kept the score to reasonable bounds.

Other fine performances came from Ray Eaton, Geoff Anthony and Dave Alexander, while Bruce Macrae improved as the game progressed and with more time will become a useful player. The only disappointment on the night was Mick Holifield, who seemed completely out of sorts.

CRACKING START

Wanderers got off to a cracking start when John Delaney thumped a shot against the woodwork in the second minute. A minute later Mackleworth saved well from Horseman.

The Met. had their best spell in the first 15 minutes, breaking quickly out of defence but they could produce little to worry the tight home defence and thanks to Terry Reardon's hard work in midfield, they saw less and less of the ball.

Wanderers, supporting each other well, began to string together some fine moves with Horseman flicking, nudging and persuading the ball to his colleagues with the precision of a snooker player. Chances came thick and fast with Mackleworth again saving at Horseman's feet after 20 minutes and then pushing over a fierce left foot shot from Macrae.

This concerted pressure had to pay dividends in the end and

Wycombe deservedly went ahead after 35 minutes. It was only right that Horseman should be the scorer. He received the ball outside the penalty area, jinked inside one defender and then tormented another before taking the ball wide and driving a shot under the 'keeper's body from a narrow angle.

After such a marvellous first half display it was inevitable the standard would drop after the interval. Even so, the Blues were rarely out of the Police half and once again it was only poor finishing that prevented further goals.

Howard Kennedy, Anthony and Holifield were all guilty of bad misses while the standard of passing also deteriorated. The Police failed to capitalise, however, and seemed unable to get the ball out of their own half.

The second goal came after one of eight second half corners won by the Blues. Horseman drilled the ball into the six-yard box where Keith Mead headed through, Substitute goalkeeper Dennis had the ball covered but Macrae got a faint touch to deflect his header into the net.

Dennis palmed a Reardon flick onto the angle of the bar and upright before the close as Wanderers finished a highly satisfactory performance with three successive corners.

WYCOMBE: P. Spittle; D. Alexander, D. Bullock (sub. K. Mead 45 mins.), J. Delaney, R. Eaton; H. Kennedy, T. Reardon, M. Holifield (sub. Evans 57 mins.); B. Macrae, A. Horseman, G. Anthony (sub. Holifield 82 mins.).

MET. POLICE: Mackleworth (sub. Dennis 45 mins.); Hill, Dickson, Ames, South; Gray (sub. Rouse 71 mins.), Jeffries, Scott; O'Rourke, Shannon, Davey.

Referee: J. Allen (High Wycombe).

Half-time: 1-0. **Goalscorers,** Wycombe — Horseman (35), Macrae (83).

Official attendance: 250.